

# Border Eagle

Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas ... Together we 'XL'



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## the inside Scoop

### Viewpoints:

*Gen. Hal Hornburg bids farewell to Air Education and Training Command.*

Page 3

### News:

*Quarterly award winners for the third quarter are pictured.*

Page 4

*Laughlin celebrates America Recycles Day.*

Page 6

### Lifestyles:

*A Laughlin veteran honors heroes and remembers his Vietnam experience.*

Page 7

### Sports and Health:

*The LSI Enforcers and Misfits football teams clash in championship game Wednesday.*

Page 11

## Air Power

Quote of the Week

"The future battle on the ground will be preceded by battle in the air. This will determine which of the contestants has to suffer operational and tactical disadvantages and be forced throughout the battle into adopting compromise solutions."

—German Gen. Erwin Rommel

## Meeting is a success

By 1st Lt. Dawnita Parkinson

Public affairs

More than 100 people attended the town hall meeting hosted by Col. Rick Rosborg, 47th Flying Training Wing commander, Wednesday night at the base theater.

Rosborg discussed current Laughlin issues, challenges and direction the base is heading, as well as listened to feedback and concerns from the base community.

"Laughlin is a great place to live and work, but I want to listen to community feedback so we can raise the standard even higher," Rosborg said. "I also want to hear your ideas so we can improve the quality of Laughlin's work and play environment."

The playing of Reveille, Retreat and Taps on base was the first topic people wanted to address, as initial problems with the volume caused some consternation among many housing residents, especially parents.

"I'm a strong believer in military tradition and growing military families, so I feel it's critically important to play these bugle calls," Rosborg said. "But I obviously want to make it as painless as possible for the base community. The volume was too loud at first and it took a few days to sort that out, but my comm squadron worked out a technical solution that I believe has satisfied everyone."

Force protection was another hot issue. Rosborg said the base is now in Force Protection Charlie "Modified."

See 'Town hall,' page 5



Photo by Airman Timothy J. Stein

### Painting pilots

Second Lieutenant Josh Hicks, student pilot, paints a bleacher at the Ruben Chavira Elementary School in Del Rio Wednesday. Hicks, along with several other members of the 84th Flying Training Squadron's K Flight, finished T-37 training early and decided to use their time to paint recess equipment for the school. The school district supplied the paint for the two-day project, which wrapped up Thursday, and the students provided their time.

## Base rockets past CFC goal

By 2nd Lt. Jessica Miller

Public affairs

The 2001 Combined Federal Campaign wrapped up Nov. 2, and Team XL nearly doubled its goal of \$50,950 to collect \$95,920.

Last-minute contributions are still being calculated, but so far the base has collected more than 188 percent of its goal, said Maj. Robert Hicks, Val Verde County's CFC point of contact. This far exceeds contributions last year, when Laughlin collected 127 percent of its goal.

Each year bases have a monetary goal, as well as a goal of 100-percent contact, which Laughlin also met. Each base's monetary goal is set based on the number and rank of people in each unit.

For the 2001 CFC, almost all base units surpassed their collec-

\$95,920 Raised

\$80,000

\$70,000

\$60,000

\$50,950 Goal

\$40,000



tion goals, an outstanding achievement by Team XL, Hicks said. Of noteworthy mention are the 86th Flying Training Squadron, which collected 477 percent of its goal, the 85th FTS, which collected 450 percent of its goal, and the 47th Operations Group staff, which collected 426 percent of its goal.

"Team XL measured up with a first-class performance," said Hicks. "I commend all of you for your leadership and commitment to this extremely worthy cause."

# Commanders' Corner

By Lt. Col. Martin Kelly  
47th Flying Training Wing Plans chief

## Readiness: Preparation is key

Being ready to respond to any emergency situation is a must. Pilots, medical personnel, security forces, firefighters and student pilots all train for emergencies that may occur on a daily basis. They do this to stay proficient in their specialties.

Knowledge is a perishable commodity. You remember how to complete a task that is done often, but when you run into a situation that only occurs once in a while, you have to refer to written guidance to find the proper way of completing the task.

First of all, what do we imply when we talk about readiness? It

has to do with three primary areas: threats, catastrophes and force mobilization. Those three areas can confront us separately or combined. All three areas relate to something we must prepare for but hope will never happen.

For example, those Force Protection and Information Condition exercises are irritating and time-consuming, but we must be prepared to contend with any threat. If we study the threat and practice the protection of our resources and our families, we are in a much better position to deal with such a threat if it does materialize.

Catastrophes are something none

of us likes to think about, but all of us knows occur. I'm talking about unfortunate occurrences such as plane crashes, chemical spills and natural disasters.

The better prepared we are to contend with these situations, the better our chances are at protecting resources and, more importantly, saving lives. The best way to prepare for these contingencies is to practice them and evaluate our practice.

The wing Exercise Evaluation Team evaluates how well we execute our own plans. This evaluation shows us how well the plan is written

See 'Prepare,' page 3

## Top Three Talk

By Chief Master Sgt. Ray Coffman  
47th Communications Squadron mission system flight chief



## Air Force great for improving self

Frustrated by the lack of meaningful employment in a small town, I decided to graduate high school early to pursue secondary education. Unfortunately the prospects for college were dimmed by two factors: — the lack of funds and the lack of available scholarships to offset the high cost of college. So, being a young and impetuous person, I began to weigh my options.

As an Air Force military brat with two who had siblings prior military service, I quickly learned from them the benefits of the armed forces. Knowing the Air Force would not only afford me the opportunity to further my education but would also provide a monthly retirement check was enough impetus for me to call the area recruiter.

This gentleman provided me with honest answers to all my ques-

tions about the Air Force and its training. So, I joined the Air Force and have never looked back.

There were many eye-opening moments through basic training, technical school and my first duty station. Unlike the favoritism I had seen in the few jobs I held in the civilian sector, whereby promotion and recognition were not always given fairly, the Air Force promotion and recognition systems are more equitably applied to all members.

I've been blessed with an amazing career in which I have traveled to 46 of the 50 states and to more than a dozen countries around the world.

My academic achievements include the award of two college degrees. Presently I'm enrolled in a 13-month track toward three computer network certifications to further increase my knowledge of the infor-

mation technology world.

Reflecting back on a career that has taken me through the entire enlisted ranks to the pinnacle rank as a chief in the Air Force, I've learned two paramount lessons: It's people who make the Air Force so great; and the Air Force is a wonderful place to self-actualize. By that I mean you can proudly and honorably serve the Air Force while still achieving your own personal goals and aspirations.

So, before you make the big decision about reenlisting or getting out, please do as many other people have done before you and sit down and write the pros and cons of an Air Force career versus a realistic civilian job. Whatever you decide is your personal choice, but always remember that I am proud to say I had a chance to serve with you!

**Border Eagle**



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*"Excellence — not our goal, but our standard."*

— 47th FTW motto

### FPCON Charlie

Laughlin is currently in Force Protection Condition Charlie. All people should remain vigilant and report suspicious activity to security forces at 298-5100.

# Hornburg bids farewell

**By Gen. Hal Hornburg**

*Air Education and Training Command commander*

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE – As I look back over the 17 months since I came to Air Education and Training Command, I feel a keen sense of accomplishment and pride in our achievements.

We've worked hard as a team to enhance recruiting, training and education, and to make them more efficient, responsive and dedicated toward our ultimate mission of replenishing the Air Force's combat capability.

Those achievements reflect one constant within AETC: the quality of our people. As I've said before, technology is not what makes us the world's greatest Air Force; it's our people – individuals with a sense of pride, commitment and purpose in accomplishing our foundational mission. I'd like to extend my appreciation to each of you who've contributed so much to our success.

The challenges we tackled have been significant, but never insurmountable. We revamped a sluggish recruiting environment by taking a proactive approach in appealing to America's youth. The new direction led to exceeding recruiting goals last year and put us on the right path to balance our skills mix.

We also worked hard to reduce the time it takes to produce pilots, which forced efficiency into the pipeline and put pilots in the warfighting commands sooner – where they're needed.

On the technical training side, AETC is gaining additional authority over the process, which will put more control back into our purview. This is allowing us to refocus 2nd Air Force on training execution.

In the area of retention, we've made strides in educating our commanders and supervisors on their responsibilities in mentoring our airmen – passing along lessons learned from one generation to the next to ensure today's young airmen are ready to assume leadership positions in the future. Those are just the highlights of our accomplishments in the past 17 months. As you move forward, I know you're prepared to excel at the

challenges waiting ahead.

Some of those challenges lie in Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom. AETC people continue to represent our country, our service and our command magnificently in myriad ways. We were some of the first airmen "out of the chute" to help after the "9-11" disaster. Much of what we are being asked to do now is unprecedented both for AETC and the Air Force. You've responded magnificently, and I know you'll continue to do so.

I've spent a considerable amount of time this past year talking about the great divide between the military and the citizens we serve, but that dynamic changed radically in September when our country once again turned to our men and women in uniform for leadership, stability and action in times of extreme turbulence. I'm proud of our airmen and the civilians who serve with us, those keeping our mission going at their home bases and those deployed in defense of our nation.

AETC remains a vital foundation in replenishing our force's combat capability, and we'll continue to meet the needs of our fellow major commands and the country in the manner they deserve.

I leave AETC having been enriched by the knowledge I take away, the experiences I've gained and the people who've dedicated themselves day in and day out to our mission success. The abilities and professionalism of every airman can be traced back to the times they were touched by AETC over the course of their careers.

AETC is the one constant during these evolving times – committed to replenishing the Air Force's combat capability by providing the best-trained, skilled and dedicated airmen in the world. From seeing you in action during my travels throughout the command, I've been reassured that AETC's mission is truly in good hands.

Cynthia and I have enjoyed being a part of the wonderful AETC team. Combat capability starts here, and I know when I call on AETC in the future, you'll be more than ready to meet the challenge. Thank you for your tremendous efforts.

## 'Prepare,' from page 2

or exposes weak areas that need to be improved. As we exercise, we become well prepared in the event we must execute our skills in an actual crisis.

Mobility exercises – now there's a real pain. That's where we play like we're going to war, process through line af-

ter line, then load pallets with all kinds of needed equipment, withdraw munitions, weapons, and professional kits that will get loaded on a flat bed. However time consuming and inconvenient all this practice is, it's worth it. For every one of our wing personnel on the mobility roster, it is imperative each one knows what to do in the event

he is called on to "go to war."

Be ready for any eventuality. Get involved with exercises, and be a participant not a spectator. You will learn more by participating that you will ever learn by watching. Most importantly, if all our readiness preparation as to somehow help save one life in a crisis, every second spent will have been worth it.

## Actionline 298-5351

This column is one way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels. By leaving your name and phone number, you are assured of a timely personal reply. If you give your name, we will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.



*Rick Rosborg*  
**Col. Rick Rosborg**  
47th FTW commander

## Town hall kudos

My wife and I enjoyed and appreciated the town hall meeting Wednesday night. It was a good chance to hear from the wing leadership on what is going on now and in the future for Laughlin Air Force Base. There are many good things happening here, and most things mentioned at the meeting were good to know. I have never been to a base town hall meeting where it was open forum for kudos and concerns.

I would like to praise the wing leadership for making these things happen. I know it must have been hard to field questions and comments from the audience, but I would like to thank you and your staff for taking questions and providing answers in a diplomatic manner. I hope no one took the meeting for granted, as most bases do not have such events.

In the future, I hope more of our people take advantage of these types of meetings. They are beneficial to all of us here at Laughlin since we are a small Air Force family.

Senior Airman Samuel Benischek  
47th Communications Squadron

## Airmanship

*Intended to help all airmen articulate the Air Force's vision of aerospace power*

### What is aerospace power?

Aerospace power is the ability to create political and military effects using aircraft, spacecraft and information. Aerospace power involves the effective use of the full range of the nation's resources to allow us to use the physical environments of air and space and our information resources to our advantage.

# Senate confirms Hornburg

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas – The Senate confirmed Gen. Hal M. Hornburg Wednesday for reappointment in the grade of general with an assignment as commander of Air Combat Command at Langley Air Force Base, Va.

The president nominated Gen. Hornburg, currently commander of Air Education and

Training Command, Oct. 17 to lead the Air Force major command that operates fighter, bomber and reconnaissance aircraft.

Gen. Hornburg has commanded AETC since June 2000 and returns to ACC where he served as vice commander from January to June 2000.

He is expected to depart for his new assignment in mid-November.

Earlier this week, the president nominated Lt. Gen. Donald G. Cook, ACC vice commander, for appointment to the grade of general and reassignment as commander of AETC. The Senate must now confirm his nomination.  
(Courtesy of AETC News Service)

## Quarterly award winners recognized

### Compiled from staff reports

Eleven Laughlin people were recognized at Club XL last week for their exceptional work throughout the third quarter of 2001.

Quarterly awards are given

to Laughlin people from various units who have performed exceptionally well in their jobs.

"We should all congratulate these fine members of Team XL," said Col. Rick Rosborg, 47th Flying Training Wing commander. "They have repeatedly displayed their exemplary work

ethic and have done a fine job in contributing to the mission."

Pictured are the quarterly award winners. Not pictured are Capt. Charles Simmons, Company Grade Officer; Master Sgt. William Fenimore, Senior NCO; and 1st Lt. James Mustin, Instructor Pilot.



**Tech. Sgt. Thomas Hensley**  
47th Operations Support Squadron  
NCO



**Airman 1st Class Irene Gaut**  
47th Aeromedical Dental Squadron  
Airman



**Juakin Castro Jr.**  
47th Operations Group  
Civilian Category I



**Thomas Fuentes**  
47th Operations Group  
Civilian Category II



**Frederick McKenney**  
47th Support Group  
Civilian Category III



**Elvia Kohler**  
47th Services Division  
Nonappropriated Funds  
Category II



**Tech. Sgt. Eric Maye**  
47th Aeromedical Dental Squadron  
Health and Safety  
Contributor



**Senior Airman Kenneth Cooper**  
47th Operations Group  
Honor Guard Member

## Newsline

### Commissary closed

The Laughlin Commissary will be closed Sunday and Monday for Veterans Day. For more information, call 298-5821.

### Commander's call set

A 47th Flying Training Wing Commander's Call is scheduled for Wednesday at 7 a.m., 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the auditorium of Anderson Hall, formerly the Operations Training Complex.

### Flu vaccine available

The flu vaccine is now available and is mandatory for all active-duty people.

Active-duty shots will be given at the Fiesta Center classroom from 2 to 4 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and from 3 to 5 p.m. Nov. 16 and Nov. 19 at Anderson Hall. People should bring their immunization records with them.

Family members and retirees can receive the shot Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. at the immunization clinic.

For more information, call 298-6469.

### Open season begins

The open season for selecting a new health plan or to change options will be in effect from Monday until Dec. 11. To enroll or make changes, call the Benefits and Entitlements Automated System at (800) 997-2378.

For additional information on open season, log on to [www.opm.gov/insure/health](http://www.opm.gov/insure/health), or call Carlos Trevino at 298-5375.

### Smokeout day set

An essay contest for the 25th anniversary of the Great American Smokeout is being sponsored by the health and wellness center. The theme for the essay is: Environmental Tobacco Smoke: What Effect Does it Have on Me?

The three best from each squadron earn a pass coordinated through their squadron commanders. Deadline for submissions is Nov. 16.

Adopt a Smoker/Dipper kits are also available. Sign up for the kits at the health and wellness center by close of business Wednesday.

For more information or to submit essays, call Tech. Sgt. Ray Fernandez at 298-6464.

### New day of worship set

The chapel will open Fridays at 7 p.m. for "Unity in Community Praise and Worship."

For more information, call 298-5111.



**Please recycle this newspaper.**





## Taliban air defenses still a threat to fighters

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Kinkade

*Air Force Print News*

Taliban air defenses in Afghanistan may be weakened, but Air Force jet fighter crews flying Operation Enduring Freedom missions still face a dangerous gauntlet of resistance in the skies.

Weeks of intensive air assault by Air Force and U.S. Navy aircraft and missile bombardment have decimated Taliban high-altitude air defenses, especially precision anti-aircraft weapons like surface-to-air missiles. However, as fighters get closer to the ground on surgical attacks, less sophisticated anti-aircraft fire grows increasingly more dangerous.

"The [Taliban] has a lot of fight left in them," said "Brillo," mission commander on land-based strike fighter missions over Afghanistan. "We did a good job in the first days of eliminating their ability to engage us at high altitude, but our ability to attack at high altitude diminishes also. We are going to be required to engage them at low altitude. The lower you go, the hit probability goes up."

Air Force bombers led the way during the early days of the air campaign over Afghanistan. They targeted larger fixed Taliban assets, like buildings and equipment. Radar-guided surface-to-air missile sites were among the earliest targets.

Now the campaign requires air attacks on smaller and more mobile targets, including vehicles and troops.

"[The early missions] eliminated the threats that forced us to change the way we do business," said Brillo, a 20-year veteran of various air campaigns and Air Force Reserve officer. "Now we're allowed to do business the way we want to, and that takes it from a strategic to a tactical sense."

Some aircrews returned from their first missions over Afghanistan Oct. 22 with reports of dense clusters of small-scale anti-aircraft artillery and machine gun fire. One returning weapons systems operator compared the barrage to a fireworks display outside the canopy of his jet.

While Taliban air defenses are still a threat to these crews, fatigue may pose a greater danger. The missions often last more than 10 hours, and aircraft are often circling target areas for up to five hours on each mission.

Even if the Air Force could somehow eliminate all air defenses under Taliban control, the crews flying Operation Enduring Freedom would face dangers. A single bullet, or simply bad luck, is all it takes to bring down a jet, Brillo said.

"I still get butterflies every time I start a mission," he said. "Even if I do everything exactly right, something could happen. It's a bad place to have to jump out."

## New Air Force vice chief of staff named

Lt. Gen. Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong was promoted to the rank of general before assuming duties as the Air Force vice chief of staff during a Nov. 5 Pentagon ceremony.

As vice chief of staff, Foglesong presides over the

Air Staff and serves as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Requirements Oversight Council.

Before becoming vice chief of staff, he was the deputy chief of staff for air and space operations at the Pentagon.

Foglesong succeeds Gen. John W. Handy, who became the commander in chief of U.S. Transportation Command and commander of Air Mobility Command at Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

(Courtesy of  
Air Force Print News)

## Anthrax tests at Pentagon prove negative

By Jim Garamone

*American Forces Press Service*

All tests for anthrax at the post office in the Pentagon Concourse are negative, Department of Defense officials said Tuesday.

Pentagon spokesman Dick McGraw said the Defense Protective Service and subject matter experts performed exhaustive examination of the U.S. Postal Service area after the discovery of trace amounts of anthrax in two of the post office's rental boxes. Examiners found no evidence of biological agent contamination and no evidence that the agent had spread to the customer service area or any other areas.

The Pentagon Concourse is a secured, enclosed shopping area used by employees.

The testing was done by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under direction of the U.S. Postal Service. Officials hand-swabbed 150 locations in the area and tested them with hand-held assays designed to detect anthrax.

"Every swab returned negative results,"

McGraw said.

Experts also used wet and dry aerosol particle samplers to test the area and found no contamination.

The CDC decontaminated the entire post office area as a precaution. Defense officials are recommending that persons who rent Concourse post office boxes go to the Pentagon health clinic for medical evaluation and appropriate treatment.

Officials stressed that no DoD mail was affected. The Concourse post office and the building's Defense Post Office are separate entities with separate mail processing facilities.

A physical exam of the airflow in the Concourse post office indicated it is negatively pressurized — that is, air flows in, not out. Officials said this greatly reduces the chance of contamination to other areas in the building except through the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. Officials tested each return duct in the system and all tests were negative.

### 'Town hall,' from page 1

"Basically, we brought our security posture more in line with the actual threat to Laughlin in order to alleviate some stress and inconvenience to the community," he said. "Military folks are allowed to go to Acuna again, and we've relaxed some leave restrictions on deployable people. However, everyone still needs to be cautious, wary and security conscious."

While the base has a tremendous safety record, Rosborg voiced concerns about two trends in ground safety: most vehicle accidents

on base are caused by inattentive backing; and there is an increasing number of sports-related injuries. He wanted everyone to be aware of these trends, which is the first step in reversing them.

Rosborg then discussed Laughlin's near future, which includes the T-6A beddown next year, a \$12.5 million fitness center and \$3 million security forces headquarters. Other projects being worked include more lighting in base housing; lighting strips on crosswalks; repairing the base pool's slide; new playground equipment; canopies over the playground equipment; and im-

proving the marina.

Several attendees asked questions pertaining to medical care, youth programs and education. Various issues were taken for action, such as reviewing the effectiveness of the clinic's triage system, studying the reasons for frequent base power outages, and reviewing the hours of several services facilities to ensure they best meet customer needs.

Rosborg said the next town hall meeting will focus on education and how the base and Del Rio community can work more closely together to bring local schools up to the standard expected by base parents.

# Laughlin celebrates America Recycles Day

**By Pat Woods**

*47th Civil Engineer Squadron  
pollution prevention manager*

Laughlin will join America in taking time out Thursday to acknowledge recycling efforts across the nation by celebrating America Recycles Day.

Recycling programs work quietly in the background but require everyone's participation to work properly, and the level evident at Laughlin mirrors its success. The recycling program itself is simple and straightforward: its goal is to divert those recyclable items from ordinary trash so the materials can ultimately be reused in other products rather than end up in a landfill. Once trash is placed in a landfill, the generator is forever liable for whatever problems it may generate in the future.

Although most people are aware of community recycling efforts, there is still a long way to go.

Americans annually throw away the following according to Environmental Defense, a not-for-profit environmental advocacy group:

■ 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour, only a

small percentage of which are now recycled

■ Enough iron and steel to continuously supply all the nation's automakers

■ Enough aluminum to rebuild our entire commercial airfleet every three months

■ 24 million tons of leaves and grass clippings, which could be composted to conserve landfill space

■ Enough office and writing paper to build a wall 12 feet high stretching from Los Angeles to New York City

Every year we also use more than 500,000 trees to produce the two-thirds of newspapers that are never recycled.

So what are we doing at Laughlin to help the situation?

The 47th Civil Engineer Squadron operates a recycling center under contract with Goodwill Industries. This center accepts paper and cardboard products, cans, glass, fluorescent bulbs

in original boxes and certain plastics. Check the bottom of plastic products and recycle only the ones with a 1 or 2 inside the recycling symbol. Plastic wrapping, blister packs, bubble wrap and such are not accepted.

During Fiscal Year 2001, Laughlin recycled 531 tons of material, or 26 percent of the base's total trash. That recycled material saved 9,027 trees, 2.2 million kilowatt hours of electricity, and 3.7 million gallons of water, which could have been used to make new products from raw materials, while avoiding 31,860 lbs of air pollution and 1,593 cubic yards of landfill space.

To help raise awareness and show some recycled products, a display will be set up in the base exchange mall area Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information on recycling, come to the event, or call Pat Woods at 298-5596.



**Thinking about getting out? Think again!**

Call Master Sgt. Jimmie Davis, 47th Flying Training Wing career assistance adviser, at 298-5456 for guidance.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Brad Pettit

## Early bird

Airman 1st Class William Charles (left) and Airman 1st Class Jeffrey Kelly, 47th Communications Squadron network administrators, enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner hosted by the Laughlin Chapel Wednesday at Club XL. Retired Maj. Gen. Gerald Prather and his cowboy band provided Blue Grass and Gospel music. An estimated 275 people attended the annual event designed to offer Laughlin people fellowship and food.

**Preventing Fraud, Waste and Abuse is everyone's job. If you know of or suspect FWA, call the FWA Hotline at 298-4170, or call the inspector general at 298-5638.**



Photo by Chiaki Iramina

## Returning home

Maj. William Uptmor, 909th Air Refueling Squadron pilot, greets his wife, Capt. Jennifer Uptmor, and children, Robert, 3, and Marcus, 1, from the cockpit of a KC-135 Stratotanker, after returning home to Kadena Air Base, Japan, last week. Uptmor and other people from the 909th ARS and 18th Wing there were deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

# Laughlin veteran salutes heroes, remembers Vietnam experience

By Airman 1st Class Brad Pettit

Editor

A place where a person doesn't want to be, but has to; a morally neutral place mixed with heroes and cowards, good and bad emotions, fear and uncertainty; a place where a person can make and lose his best friends, while simultaneously learning lessons on humanity and spirituality.

That is how Roberto Barrera, Laughlin Family Support Center director and Vietnam veteran, describes a battlefield. And he said Americans who fought and died on battlefields like this have earned his deep respect and admiration.

"They are my heroes and friends," he said. "They fought for American liberty and should always be remembered for the sacrifices they made. We should remember them and their contributions on Veterans Day Sunday."

Since he was a young man, Barrera said he had one dream: to join the Marines. While attending Del Rio High School, he and a friend talked about joining once they graduated. In 1966 his friend, Jesus Limones, enlisted and was serving in Vietnam by 1968. However, Barrera decided to put his dream on hold for a while.

"My father wanted me to go to college since none of my family had gone," he said. "So I went for two years, but couldn't wait any longer. I enlisted in '68."

As he wrapped up his military training, and possible service in Vietnam drew closer, Barrera received the shocking news that Limones had been killed in the war. Barrera said his friend's death will always affect him.

"I went to the Washington D.C. Vietnam Memorial in 1998," he said. "People had told me about how emotional it would be and that I should be prepared. I thought I was, but when I saw his name I broke down. It was so hard."

By 1969, Barrera's boots were on Vietnam soil. But his time there would be brief and tragic.

"I had been in Vietnam six weeks," he explained. "I was riding in the third car of a five-car armored convoy when the enemy remotely detonated a 500-pound land mine. The car I was in was carrying Carlos Hathcock, the Marine Corp's top sniper. As

an American sniper with a lot of kills, he was one of the Vietcong's top targets."

Barrera suffered third-degree burns on more than 41 percent of his body and lost his left arm at the shoulder, as well as his right hand. Eight people in the convoy were also seriously injured, but no one was killed. Barrera's experience is mentioned in the book about Hathcock entitled "Marine Sniper: 93 Confirmed Kills" by Charles Henderson.

Though he admits the experience was hard on him physically and emotionally, he also said he had the perfect guide leading him through it.

"My experience created within me a very strong relationship with God," he said. "I learned that we need to be close to God in order to deal not only with war, but with daily life also. I would not be the person I am today unless I had gone through all of this."

Barrera, who regularly relates his Vietnam experience to others around Veterans Day, said he is often asked which branch of service is the best. He uses his experience in Vietnam and the help he received by many brave veterans to answer this question.

"A Marine Corps helicopter picked me up at the attack scene," he said. "It flew me to the U.S.S. Repose, a Navy hospital ship. An Air Force C-130 then flew me to Japan where I [was] stabilized. From there, I was flown to a burn center at Fort Sam Houston, an Army post. You take away the help of any one of those branches, and I wouldn't have made it back. All branches are equally important, each with its own role in the mission."

Barrera said he hopes the veterans of the present conflict in Afghanistan can return home with a sense of victory and pride.

"I pray for [the memory of all veterans] and the military men and women fighting in Afghanistan. We should remember and recognize them all."



**Barrera**

## The *XLer*



Photo Airman 1st Class Brad Pettit

**Capt. Susan Black**  
47th Medical Operations Squadron  
Family Advocacy chief

**Hometown:** West Palm Beach, Fla.  
**Family:** Husband, Chaplain (Capt.) Richard Black; daughter, Shamille; son, Christian.  
**Time at Laughlin:** 1 1/2 years  
**Time in service:** 7 years  
**Name one way to improve life at Laughlin:** Get involved in the community  
**Greatest accomplishment:** Making a personal choice to live a Christian life and having a great family  
**Hobbies:** Cooking and aerobics  
**Bad habit:** Procrastination  
**Favorite film or book:** The Color Purple  
**Favorite band or musician:** Shirley Caesar  
**If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why?** My grandfather, to record his history and experiences.

## Where are they now?

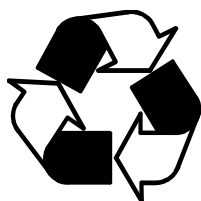
**Name:** Capt. Jeff Strommer  
**Class/date of graduation from Laughlin:** Class 97-10, June 13, 1997  
**Aircraft you now fly and base you are stationed at:** B-1B, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho  
**Mission of your current aircraft?** Heavyweight bombing  
**What do you like most about your current aircraft?** It's fast and lethal.  
**What do you dislike most about your current aircraft?** Lack of funding  
**What was the most important thing you learned at Laughlin besides learning to fly?** How to balance my work with my family life  
**What is your most memorable experience from Laughlin?** Pinning on my wings  
**What advice would you give SUPT students at Laughlin?** Never give up.



(Courtesy photo)

Complaints? Any complaints or concerns about work at Laughlin should be addressed through the chain of command. If problems persist, call Lt. Col. Peter Godwin, Laughlin inspector general, at 298-5638.

**Recycle.**







**Don't drink  
and drive!**

## Reservists: Know rights before returning to civilian work force

**By Capt. Lucy Carrillo**

*47th Flying Training Wing*

*Legal Office adverse actions chief*

**M**any reservists are being called to active duty. The 47th Security Forces Squadron recently has 21 reservists who came on active duty and showed up at Laughlin almost overnight. Many of these reservists left jobs at home.

The Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 is a federal law giving members and former members of the United States armed forces the right to go back to the civilian job they held before military service, provided several qualifications are met.

First, you must have a permanent job before coming on active duty and must give your employer notice that you are leaving for active duty. Notice can be oral or written. You can best protect your interests by sending a letter by certified mail or having your employer sign your copy of the letter, acknowledging receipt.

If you are discharged from military service, your discharge must have been characterized as honorable or general. Once you are no longer on active duty, you must promptly return to work. If you were gone for under 30 days, you must report back to the first shift after you return. If you are gone from 31 to 180 days, you must apply in writing for work within 14 days of completing your military service. If you are gone more than 180 days, you must apply in writing within 90 days. In your letter, tell your employer you worked there before and that you

left for military service.

Once back at work, you should be treated as if you never left for military service. Your status, seniority and most pension rights will be the same as your peers who did not go on active duty. Your employer must train you on any new equipment or techniques and refresh your skills. If you have any service-connected disability, your employer will accommodate you. You will have a protected period, the length depending on how long you were gone, during which, if you get fired, your employer must prove that it was not because of your military service. You cannot be discriminated against because of your military service or service obligation.

Your health benefits will be immediately reinstated once you are back at work. There will be no waiting period and no exclusion of pre-existing conditions. Tricare does not cover family members for tours of 30 days or under, so you can request your employer continue to carry you and your family on the company health plan. Your employer is required to do so if you request. You can get up to 18 months of coverage, but your employer can pass on the full cost to you.

There are agencies that can help you with enforcement of your rights, so you do not have to go to court. The Department of Defense National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve can be reached at (800) 336-4590. The Department of Labor, responsible for resolving and investigating re-employment issues, can be reached at [www.dol.gov/elaws/userra0.htm](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/userra0.htm) or (202) 219-9110.

# Morale remains high while fighting continues

By Capt. Pamela A.Q. Cook

*Air Force Print News*

High morale and patriotism will keep troops focused on the task at hand, said Lt. Gen. Charles F. Wald, the combined forces air component commander of Operation Enduring Freedom.

He said he does not see low morale becoming an issue in the war on terrorism.

Wald made his comments while on his farewell visit throughout Southwest Asia before relinquishing command to Lt. Gen. T. Michael Moseley.

Moseley took over the Enduring Freedom air campaign as the commander of 9th Air Force and U.S. Central Command Air Forces Wednesday.

"I've never seen anything in my life where the morale has been so high," Wald said. Citing a

bomber crew that returned following an extremely long mission the first night of the campaign, he said people are "ready to fly again right then and there."

One significant difference with this war over previous operations is that the United States is responding to an attack on America, Wald said.

"Every place I go there's an extreme professionalism," Wald said. "Every person I've seen said, 'I want to be here. I want to be a part of this, and I'll do it until the end.' I don't think there'll ever be a morale problem in this war."

He said he is proud of the newest generation of airmen.

"Generation X is no different than any other generation. They're patriotic people," he said. "They're emotional about America. They stand

tall with the flag. They'll fight this fight to the end. They'll sacrifice their lives just like any other generation for our country has.

"It's clear that people are proud of the fact that they can serve their country," Wald said. "They're actually more worried about their families at home than they are about themselves for a change."

Ultimately, Wald said the campaign is going "about as well as we could have expected" and that Americans have a clear picture of what is being done to combat terrorism.

"I think [Osama bin Laden] and the Taliban have just bit off a chunk that's a little bit too big for them and something they probably misjudged," he said. "And they're going to regret it. There's a lot of American military folks who are going to make sure that happens. They'll stay 'til the end."

## Chapel Schedule

### Catholic

#### **Sunday**

- Mass, 9:30 a.m.
- Confession by appointment
- Sunday school, 10:30 a.m.
- Little Rock Scripture Study, 11 a.m.
- in Chapel Fellowship Hall

#### **Thursday**

- Choir, 6 p.m.

### Jewish

Max Stool, call 775-4519

### Muslim

Dr. Mostafa Salama, call 768-9200

### Protestant

#### **Sunday**

- Adult Sunday school, 9 - 10:30 a.m.
- General worship, 11 a.m.

#### **Wednesday**

- Women's Bible Study, 12:30-2:15 p.m. at chapel
- Choir, 7 p.m. at chapel

For more information on chapel events and services, call 298-5111.

Friday, Border Eagle.

Wednesday, this newspaper:

<http://www.af.mil/newspaper>

# Enforcers rout Misfits, 29-6, to win flag football crown

By Airman Timothy J. Stein

Staff writer

In a one-sided game from the beginning, the LSI Enforcers defeated the Misfits, 29-6, Wednesday in the flag football championship at the base football field.

The Enforcers controlled the game on the arm of quarterback Art Rodriguez, who threw for 235 yards and three touchdowns.

The Enforcers started the game strongly, stopping the Misfits on fourth and 15 in the game's first possession. They then put together an 11-play, 65-yard drive capped when Rodriguez hit wide receiver Jerry Yanezse with a 20-yard touchdown strike. The extra point put the Enforcers up, 7-0.

The Misfits were forced to punt after three plays on their next drive. The Enforcers took the ball over on their own 20-yard line and quickly scored when Rodriguez hit receiver Joe Ortiz with a 60-yard touchdown pass. The first half ended with the Enforcers up, 14-0.

The second half was no better for the Misfits. On their first drive, Enforcer defenders sacked Misfit quarterback, Chance Roden, for a safety. Three plays later, Rodriguez hit receiver Eloy Chavez with a 57-yard scoring strike. The rest of the half went much the same way.



Photo by Airman Timothy J. Stein

Art Rodriguez, Enforcer quarterback, holds the championship trophy high over his head Wednesday. Rodriguez passed for 235 yards and three touchdowns in the 29-6 victory.

The Enforcers ended the season with a record of 11-0. They defeated the 87th Talons, 21-13, to reach the championship game.

The Misfits end with a 8-3 record. They defeated the squad from LCSAM, 20-0, to reach the final game.

## Sports and Health briefs

### Football games televised

Club Amistad is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sundays featuring the Sunday National Football League ticket. Every NFL game is broadcast. Come see your favorite team play.

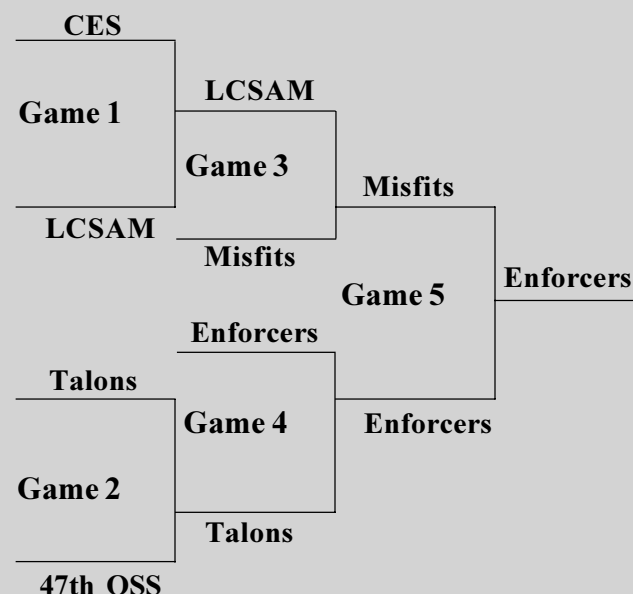
For more information, call 298-5374.

### Aerobics classes canceled

The aerobics classes Monday and Nov. 22 at the XL Fitness Center have been canceled.

For more information, call the fitness center at 298-5251.

## Flag Football Playoff Bracket



## Fitness center changes aerobics program

By Kathleen Barrett

Lead aerobics instructor

The XL Fitness Center expanded and revised its aerobic fitness program when Millennium Health and Fitness of Vista, Calif., took over the aerobic contract in November.

The traditional eight classes per week have been expanded to 12 classes per week with new classes such as floor exercise and power yoga added to the program.

In addition to the two new classes, the kickboxing class, has been changed.

The new kickboxing class is taught with the same choreography and music as world wide gyms.

The class combines movements from kickboxing, boxing and self-defense with constant aerobic movement. It is an upper and lower body endurance workout that is taught Wednesdays and Fridays at 11:30 a.m. and Thursdays at 5 p.m.

The floor exercise class incorporates resistance training and stretching techniques with an adjustable bench and traditional floor aerobics in a

jazzercise-style format. It is taught Tuesdays at 6 a.m. and at 5 p.m. and Thursdays at 6 a.m.

Power yoga is a combination of traditional yoga movements and Pilates-inspired exercises. It is taught Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

Step, a high-intensity, low-impact workout using an adjustable bench is taught Mondays at 5 p.m. and Thursdays at 11:30 a.m.

For more information contact the fitness center at 298-5251.

**Safety belts save lives - so buckle up!**